The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

AGITATE!
EDUCATE!
ORGANIZE!

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UNTIMELY PEACE PLAN OPPOSED BY A. F. OF L.

Washington, July 7.—The A. F. of L. executive council has declined the invitation to have American trade unionism represented at "an international conference of trade unions" on September 17, in Switzerland to discuss "the demands of peace of the trade unions."

This conference was agreed to at a meeting on June 8, in Stockholm, of Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria trade unionists. In answer to the invitation to attend the Switzerland conference, forwarded by President Lindquist of the Stockholm conference, President Gompers forwarded the following cablegram:

"The executive council of the American Federation of Labor, in session, after due deliberation upon invitation received from you and from Oudegeest of Amsterdam, Holland, to send delegates to a conference proposed to be held at Stockholm September 17, decided that we regard all such conferences as premature and untimely and can lead to no good purpose. We apprehend that a conference such as is contemplated would rather place obstacles in the way to democratize the institutions of the world and hazard the liberties and opportunities for freedom of all peoples. Therefore, the American Federation of Labor with its 2,500,000 members cannot accept invitation to participate in such a conference. If an international trade union conference is to be held it should be at a more opportune time than the present or the immediate future, and in any event the proposals of the American Federation of Labor for international conference should receive further and more sympathetic consideration. Shall be glad to continue correspondence."

The Gompers' cablegram was also transmitted to the French federation of labor, to the British trades union congress and to the federation of labor of Holland.

CAR MEN'S PAY UP AMID STRIKE TALK

New York, July 7.—The fact that an increase in pay had been granted to motormen and conductors on the Third Avenue Railway system became public yesterday, while leaders of the Carmen's Union continued their efforts to organize those and other traction men. Demands will soon be presented to company officials, it is announced in spite of the voluntary increase given by the company.

The wage increase, announcements of which were posted Saturday, June 30, in the car barns, provides that men who have been with the company more than six months will receive 30 cents an hour, instead of 27; men more than a year in service get 32 cents, and men in the service more than fifteen years 34 cents. Louis Fridiger, counsel for the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employes of America, asserted yesterday that the increase given to the men during the strike last summer had gradually been withdrawn. He denounced the wage increase of the Third Avenue as "a contemptible effort to influence the men against joining the organization." He asserted policemen had tried to prevent men from attending a union meeting in the Bronx. A protest against this has been sent to the Public Service Commission.

COAL SITUATION.

Washington, July 7.—At a conference of coal operators in this city it was tentatively agreed that soft coal should be stabilized in price and that $3 per ton should be the average wholesale price. Objection has been raised by certain officials of the government, creating an awkward situation in that officials of the government were instrumental in convening the conference of the coal operators and urged the reduction offered by the operators. It is likely that the President will take a hand in the controversy and harmonize the differences. The price offered by the coal operators does not meet the approval of certain government officials for the reason that the price is deemed to be excessive, and that there is no reason why soft coal should not be sold at a much lower price than $3 per ton. The coal consumed by the government will be secured at a much lower price than $3, but there is a widespread feeling that the American people should participate in a much lower price than than $3-per-ton-at-the-mine coal. The government will, however, it is believed, insist on a lower price.

RESISTING 8-HOUR DAY.

Hoquiam, Wash., July 7.—Shingle manufacturers are spending money without stint in an advertising campaign against the eight-hour demand of their organized employes.

"The manufacturers are not attacking the eight-hour day itself," says the Southwest Washington Labor Press. "That would hardly do, as experience has demonstrated that it is correct from every standpoint. Their arguments really contain no argument at all, but when you get down to the meat of them they are but appeals to the public to help the manufacturers save all the profits they are now making.

"The price of shingles was never higher, nor profits greater, and no better time has ever occurred for the installation of the shorter work day in that industry than right now. And from the workers' side the time is ripe owing to the shortage of skilled weavers, the killing pace demanded in the mills, and the habit of the manufacturers of flooding the market and then having to shut down after having driven many of the men into other lines of employment."

OVERWORK PROTESTED.

Sagamore, Mass., July 7.—"Don't overtax the strength of the workers of the nation during the war," warned Miss Agnes Nestor of the Glove Makers' union, Chicago, at the annual sociological conference here. She declared that war has been made an excuse to retard eight-hour legislation, "where as the fact that we are at war should be a particular reason for hastening such legislation."

"The question is faced of how seriously the long hours of labor under present day industrial conditions, with women speeded up, standing in certain trades and running heavy machines, will effect the future of the race."

CHEAPER POTATOES.

Washington, July 7.—Reports coming in from various sections of the country indicate that the price of potatoes is rapidly tumbling and the prediction has been made that $1 a bushel will be the prevailing price shortly, wholesale prices on June 30 showing a reduction from 40 to 50 cents per bushel.

DUNCAN URGES 8-HOUR DAY FOR RUSSIANS

Washington, July 7.—A dispatch from Petrograd, Russia, to the New York Times contains the following reference to James Duncan, First Vice-President of the American Federation of Labor, who was a member of the United States commission of Russia:

James Duncan, labor member of the United States Commission to Russia, held the attention of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates for more than an hour tonight while he explained how America had met its labor problems in the last decade, and begged the Russian Delegates to benefit by the experience and mistakes of the United States. Organized workers of America, he said, might be of service to the working people of Russia in helping them to develop practical trade unions.

In connection with the munitions question in Russia he expressed the hope that the workingmen here would follow the example of America in introducing an urgency clause in their eight-hour legislation which, in time of war, would allow the operation of factories to their full capacity, so that the army might be adequately supplied with ammunition. He proposed a system of eight-hour shifts which, without imposing hardship on laborers, would increase the output to a point necessary for the successful conduct of the war.

"Soldiers at the front," Mr. Duncan said, "cannot be covered by an eight-hour day provision; war is not conducted that way. In giving the best possible service within twenty-four hours workingmen will be subjected to no greater hardship than soldiers in the trenches."

At one time the speaker was interrupted by a sailor who shouted that America was a nation of capitalists, but he was promptly hooted down by the rest of the council. Except for this one incident, the delegates were sympathetic and attentive.

Replying to Mr. Duncan, President N. O. Tcheidse, of the council, said that if America agreed with Russia in its democratic aims, including a speedy conclusion of the war, as indicated by utterances of President Wilson that they were in full sympathy, he extended the heartiest greeting to the American delegate and would earnestly welcome America's assistance in the achievement of those aims. The Russian people, President Tcheidse said, were in favor of a vigorous prosecution of the war in order to bring about peace as soon as possible.

In conference with M. Skobeleff, minister of labor, before the meeting, Mr. Duncan discussed the interpretation of the Russian watchword, "peace without annexation."

"The minister of labor made it clear to me," Mr. Duncan told an Associated Press correspondent, "that Russian democracy means nothing by this phrase which we cannot heartily subscribe to. Before this phrase was defined it seemed to mean that Germany was to emerge from the war with impunity and without making reparation for the damage she had done. But the Russian delegates do not mean this at all. They believe that Germany should be compelled to restore and make full reparation for Belgium, and they are not opposed to the principle of indemnities. Their word 'contribution' refers exclusively to the kind of war levy imposed by Germany upon Brussels. There is no important difference between the aims of the Russian democracy and our own. We both agree upon the conditions upon which peace can be determined."

EXCORIATES LEGISLATURE.

Philadelphia, July 7.—The Philadelphia North American editorially excoriates the legislature of the State, which has just adjourned. It will be recalled that the Pennsylvania legislature repealed the Full Crew Law, notwithstanding the fact that the Council of National Defense had advised against the repealing of any labor legislation until such time as an emergency existed, which made such a course necessary. The Full Crew repeal bill will probably be vetoed by Governor Brumbaugh. The editorial says:

"The legislature which adjourned in confusion early last Friday morning will be memorable as the feeblest and the most worthless law-making body that the state has known in 30 years. It was too low grade to be effective, otherwise it might have attained the distinction of being infamous. It began session at about the time the nation entered the war, yet the record will be searched in vain for evidence that the existence of such a conflict with its manifold responsibilities, was recognized. No serious thought was given to the vast problems arising out of an undertaking which may cost the lives of thousands of Pennsylvanians and will exact sacrifice from every inhabitant of the State."

MILITARY INSURANCE.

Washington, July 7.—A conference has been held between the secretary of the treasury and representatives of the life insurance companies of the country. An effort is being made to formulate some feasible plan of insurance for those engaged in military service, with the possible doing away with the pension system now in vogue. It is a gigantic problem, but there appears to be a strong sentiment in favor of making an exhaustive investigation into the subject. No other country has ever attempted the institution of such a plan, but expert insurance men are expected to present some basis after giving the subject consideration. It is stated that the amount of money paid in pensions growing out of the civil war approaches $5,000,000,000, while the number of men engaged in that conflict approximated 2,200,000.

MOVE TO BUY CAR LINES.

New York, July 7.—Necessary steps to acquire control or ownership of some of the surface railways in this city are sought in a resolution introduced in the board of estimate and apportionment, would confer authority on the corporation counsel to determine the legal action necessary.

This preparatory move was taken so that the city might conserve public welfare in the event of the disintegration or reorganization of these railways.

CEMENT MILL STRIKE SETTLED

Bonner Springs, Kan., July 7.—The strike of the cement mill employes of this place has been settled, all men returning to work, those who are discharged being reinstated in their former positions. The company agreed not to discriminate against any employe from joining the union.

PLUMBERS RAISE WAGES.

Odgen, Utah, July 7.—The Plumbers' union has secured a union shop agreement and increase wages, after conferring with their employers. The new rate is $5 instead of $4.50; juniors will receive $4 instead of $3.50.

SHIFTING OF LABOR, "ST. VITUS DANCE"

George School, Pa., July 7.—The continual shifting of labor from one place to another was termed "the industrial St. Vitus dance" by Robert C. Clothier, of Philadelphia in a discussion of the labor problem at the Friends' summer school.

This shifting, the speaker said, which was costly to the employer, was largely due to preventable causes, which he enumerated as low wages, long hours, fear of discharge, petty injustices, disagreeable working conditions and for the failure of the employer to treat the worker as a human being.

This, the speaker urged, was the result of the drifting apart of the employer and employe since the days of the apprentice who lived directly with the employer. He declared for shorter hours, saying that the output of shorter hours was in the main greater than in longer hours.

In an arraignment of the present industrial system Dr. Jesse H. Holmes declared against the monotony to the employe because of machine-run and speeding-up processes which increase the strain. He cited breaker boys in coal fields and girls employed in silk mills and in canning establishments, whose labor, while increasing efficiency from a business standpoint, was deadly to the people from a social standpoint. The monotonous performance, in his opinion, led to vicious amusements and destroyed ingenuity and real art—deadened the creative sense. The making of cheap things made cheap men and women, was his ultimatum, in a plea that the worker be given more leisure for self-development.

SLOGAN OF EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN

Washington, July 7. — "Every labor organization in the country should be keenly interested in the welfare of women in industry," remarked a labor man in this city. "In all adaptable employments women have an equal right to positions. They should be encouraged rather than discouraged. With the transition of industry during the war period the employers, true to their well known concepts, will endeavor to substitute women at a lower wage scale than they are now paying their male employes. It is already being done. Patriotism is the cloak with which they are endeavoring to hide their financial gains by a lower labor cost. Women are being employed in railroad shops and other forms of employment entirely unsuited to them while thousands of men are available for these positions. The opportunity which the war affords unfair and unscrupulous employers to secure cheaper labor by the employment of women should be met by vigorous action by the unions of labor in the localities where this practice is being inaugurated. Equal pay for equal work should be the slogan. Every central body in the country should provide for a standing committee to collect data in its locality relative to the employment of women. If those who are substituting women for men are not paying wages formerly paid to men a local campaign should be inaugurated against the practice and the facts given the widest possible publicity and the officers of the American Federation of Labor informed. When a nation-wide campaign for equal pay is instituted by the labor unions the results will not only be beneficial to women who will enter industry, but the standards established by the unions will largely be maintained. We should not delay our efforts. It will be infinitely easier to check a tendency than correct an abuse."

TWO-PLATOON PLAN LIKED.

Washington, D. C., July 7.—With a recommendation urging more men and more money if necessary the public order committee of the Washington Board of Trade gave unqualified indorsement to the two-platoon system for the local fire department, at a meeting and referred the proposal to the executive committee for further action.

The action was taken after the committee had heard Raymond E. Oden, president of the Firemen's Association of the District of Columbia, explain why the association advocated the movement, and had heard George B. Hargan, veteran firefighter and president of the Firemen's Association of Chicago, tell of the benefits derived from the system in Chicago since the installation of the idea in April last.

TELEPHONE GIRLS QUIT.

Aberdeen, Wash., July 7.—Telephone girls employed by the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph company quit their employment rather than surrender membership in their union. Citizens have signed a petition to the company in behalf of the girls. It is stated that "this is a workingman's city and we believe in the right of all workers to join legitimate trade unions and that by so doing they surrender none of their rights as citizens of a free country." The girls must work four months for $1 a day, and $9 a week is the maximum wage.

CARPENTERS' INCREASE.

Indianapolis, Ind., July 7.—Secretary Duffy of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters reports the results of trade movements as follows: Lincoln, Ill., an increase from 45 to 50 cents per hour; Texarkana, Texas, from 50 to 60 cents per hour; Franklin, Mass., from 46 to 50 cents per hour; Geneseo, Ill., from 40 to 45 cents per hour.

SHIP YARD LABORERS WIN.

Benicia, Cal., July 7.—The new union of ship yard laborers affiliated with the A. F. of L., secured the eight-hour day and a minimum wage of $2.75 after a one-day's strike. The agreement recognizes the union and provides time and one-half for over time and double time for Sundays and holidays.

NO SHAM ECONOMY.

Much has been said on the subject of economy since the beginning of the war.

Some have advocated that every citizen organize his living along lines of rigid economy. No sooner was this idea set forth than others declared that we must not radically change our mode of living lest we unsettle the industrial and commercial world. They pointed out the fact that nothing is so sensitive as the credit organization of business and that sudden changes in national mode of living would react disastrously. This latter advice seemed a bit ironical to the great masses of the nation who are wage-earners and who compared the swiftly rising prices with their almost stationary wages.

Out of the discussion there developed this fact—the nation is preparing itself for the greatest test it has ever endured; it is stripping itself for the fight and like an athlete getting into training to develop hard sinews of endurance. Weak places are disclosed that they may be eliminated. The whole process must go on under rigid, scientific principles. We must know the truth of our weakness in order to achieve our greatest strength. So our nation is passing through a period of shifting values and changing economies. The purpose is to eliminate the waste and to make everything count for national effectiveness.

As a nation we must get rid of those qualities and customs that are associated with soft living in the times of peace and national luxury. We must develop endurance, power, spiritual insight and creative ability. With this changing of values there must come a readjustment in the commercial and industrial world. Occupations and industries may for a time disappear completely and new ones be developed to meet war necessities.

The guiding thought of new economies will be the elimination of waste and the enhancement of effectiveness. Our economic, social, and political institutions as they existed in peace times were loosely co-ordinated and widely differentiated.

In order to meet war needs and serve war purposes these must be co-ordinated and unified. The spirit and purpose of the whole nation must be unified. In a democratic people this cannot be accomplished by compulsion, but it must come through the voluntary response of every citizen. In each household there must develop the purpose to adjust the household economy to the national economy. The elimination of waste in the household will contribute to the elimination of national waste. Waste here refers not only to the material things but to the spiritual and creative abilities of the members of the household. No one must be a waster or a shirker; the effort must be a genuine one and not a pretense.

Among certain families has been inaugurated with striking publicity, a conspicuous program of economy featured by a three-course dinner. With the accounts of this conspicuous economy, enumerating the articles comprising the menu, the whole sham was disclosed. It was a mockery to those thousands of families who must live in most rigid economy in order to make ends meet.

The war must be won by genuine efforts based upon the right principles. It is of no advantage, nor does it further our purpose, to deceive ourselves or try to deceive our neighbors; every effort must be genuine and must be intelligently directed to further the best interests of the whole people. Personal interests and personal activities must be subordinated to national welfare.—July American Federationist.

NEED MORE MONEY.

Washington, July 7.—The total amount of money received by the American Federation of Labor as contributions to the Danbury Hatters for the purpose of reimbursing them for the loss of their homes is not sufficient to meet the emergency. It is urged upon all those unions, whose members have not contributed the one hour's voluntary assessment, to do so at the earliest possible moment. According to announcements, all of the Hatters' homes will be disposed of by August 9. These workmen should be reimbursed at the earliest possible moment.

PASS DAY-SAVING BILL.

Washington, July 7.—The senate has passed the bill "to save daylight and to provide a standard of time for the United States." The effect of this bill, if enacted into law, will be to turn the clocks forward a hour during the period between the last Sunday in April and the last Sunday in September of each year. The United States will be divided into five zones, and the limits of these zones shall be defined by the interstate commerce commission.

In urging the passage of the bill, Senator Robinson of Arkansas said:

"This bill accomplishes two purposes. It enacts into law the existing standard of time, which now has no authority of law except by action of the legislature in a few states. The present standard of time was adopted by general agreement and at the instance of the railroads in 1883.

"In addition to making the present measurement of time the legal standard, the act provides that for the period indicated the clock shall be advanced each year. The bill goes into effect January 1, 1918."

BAKERS OPEN UP SHOP.

Denver, July 7.—Because three of the largest bakeries in the city refused to meet the increased cost of living by agreeing to a small advance in wages the bakers went on strike. The Bakers' union has now opened up a shop and will employ a portion of the strikers. This is the second shop that has been opened up by the union bakers in Denver since the difficulty arose. The Department of Labor sent a representative here for the purpose of making an effort to secure a settlement, but the bakery owners were obdurate. The outlook for the success of the new union bakeries is excellent.

ADJUST TROLLEY STRIKE.

Shenandoah, Pa., July 7.—The trolley strike on the Schuylkill traction lines in this city and region was settled late last night by the company taking back all discharged employes and at the old rate pending a readjustment in August, 1918, when the agreement expires.

BUSHELMEN FORM UNION.

Hartford, July 7.—A new local bushelmen's union, affiliated with the Journeymen Tailors of America, was organized last evening by Frank DeLuca, general organizer. About thirty members were present.

BARBERS RAISE WAGES.

Norfolk, Va., July 7.—It was necessary for the Barbers' union to call a short strike before employers in this city agreed to a new wage scale which raises rates $1 a week.

PORT INCREASES PAY.

Seattle, Wash., July 7.—The Seattle Union Record prints the following interesting item: Following a request from a mass meeting of truckers held two weeks ago the Seattle Port Commission announced Thursday that starting June 21 the wages for truckers on municipal docks will be 55 cents an hour for a nine-hour day with 75 cents for overtime, overtime to be any hours betwen 6 p. m. and 7 a. m., Sundays and holidays. This increase granted by the municipal dock places them high above all other docks in their treatment of employes. The railroad docks pay 40 and 60 cents, straight and overtime, and private firms are paying 44 and 60.

San Francisco, with practically every important dock municipally controlled, pays 65 cents straight, and $1 overtime, while across the bay in Oakland, where the docks are mostly railroad owned, the wages are 50 and 60. It is interesting to note that in each city the municipal docks are the first to grant decent conditions to the workers.

An illuminating fact concerning the shipping industry of Seattle is that many of the private docks are owned by foreign interests. Dodwell & Co., also known as the Borderline company, both being controlled by the same capital—largely English money. Piers 14 and 4 are two of these companies docks. The Arlington Dock company, one of the Waterhouse docks, is also largely controlled by English capital.

The port commission consistently follows the theory that American dollars can find a home in America and that there is no better medium of circulation than well paid workers.

RAILWAY EMPLOYES' DEPARTMENT NEWS

St. Louis, Mo., July 7.—President A. O. Wharton of the Railway Employes Department in his last official circular has this to say:

An additional one cent an hour increase has been granted to the machinists on the west end of the Northern Pacific and Great Northern systems, which establishes the following rates:

Northern Pacific east of the Mandan, 53 cents per hour. West of latter place, 54 cents per hour. Great Northern, Minot and east, 53 cents per hour, and west of the latter place, 54 cents per hour. Northern Pacific carmen have accepted a 5-cent per hour increase for all car department employes under the nine-hour day.

The New York, New Haven and Hartford System Federation has secured a flat increase of 3 cents per hour for all trades, effective June 1.

MAY DEPOPULATE STATE.

Chicago, July 7.—"The law ought to depopulate West Virginia—any State is better to live in than West Virginia now."

This is the opinion of the West Virginia "slave law," expressed by Secretary Olander of the Illinois State federation of labor. The West Virginia law makes it an offense for any citizen to fail to perform at least 36 hours' labor. Similar legislation was introduced in the Illinois legislature, but the trade union movement defeated it. Advocates of the bill were asked how could they enjoy their annual vacations and comply with the law. They replied that they would have to leave Illinois. The trade unionists intimated that many workers would follow this suggestion if the bill was approved.

MINER BLAMES ROADS.

Springfield, Ill., July 7.—"If the railroads will furnish the cars we will furnish the coal. The miners and mines of Illinois are more than able to supply the 25,000,000 additional tons of coal asked for by the state council of defense if means are provided for its moving by the common carriers running through the state."

This was the answer of Frank Farrington, president of the United Mine Workers, Illinois district, to the plea by the state defense council for the biggest output of coal this year in the history of Illinois.

"Both operators and miners" said Farrington, "are willing and anxious to furnish more than that amount of excess over the ordinary coal output. They can do it easily. It is up to the railroads to furnish the cars. Everyone knows what the conditions have been in the past. If this is the case this year the mines will be tied up the same way they were last year."

LEVER FOOD BILL.

Washington, July 7.—The Lever food administration bill which passed the House of Representatives on June 23 will be amended by the United States senate. Already the agricultural committee of the senate has modified the prohibition clause by clothing the President with authority to determine whether beer and wine shall be manufactured. While the House defeated the Keating amendment, intended to safeguard the rights of labor guaranteed by the labor provisions of Clayton law, the senate has been urged by the American Federation to insert this amendment in the senate. Indications now are that the bill will be passed by the senate during this week or early in the coming one.

EMPLOYES ACCEPT.

Denver, July 7.—After the newly formed union of street railway employes was betrayed by the committee appointed to conduct negotiations with the manager of the company, the management offered to advance wages of the men 2 cents per hour as a war bonus and one cent an hour for the maintenance of certain coasting averages on the various divisions. The men rejected this offer, asserting that it had strings attached. The company finally conceded the 3 cents per hour advance. The union was betrayed, but the influence of its short life made an impression on the company which is historic in all such situations.

PROFITS 400 PER CENT.

New York, July 7.—The American Car and Foundry company made a gross profit of nearly 400 per cent last year in the manufacture of war munitions and railroad cars. The net income of $[illegible] was $[illegible] greater than the previous year.

PIECE PLAN OPPOSED; STOPS JOINT ACTION

Chicago, July 7.—Editor Sweeney, of the Tailor, official magazine of the Journeymen Tailors' union, gives these excellent reasons against the piece plan system in this industry:

"Under the present piece plan the discharge or quitting of a workman causes no great inconvenience to the firm. All they have to do is to turn the work over to another man. One or more people quitting in a shop conducted on the section plan is equal to taking a cog or two out of the wheel of a sewing machine.

"It will be readily seen how powerless the employers would be in case of strikes. The whole section must work or none at all. This fact in itself proves that the workmen would be more independent under the weekly system than they are under the piece plan.

"The adoption of the weekly system would abolish home tailoring and cause the establishment of regular hours of work. Piece work is an inducement to work more hours in order to make a little more money in a given time. This extra money is made at the expense of our mental and physical powers, and sometimes at the discomfort of the entire family. It also has a great tendency of keeping wages low. The wages of piece workers are never as high, considering the hours they work, as that of the day or week workers.

"The merchant tailors fully realize how dependent they would be under a weekly system, hence their opposition to it. The weekly plan could not be run on a small scale, hence the opposition of the small employers. A small business of any kind does not, and cannot, pay living wages. Still they exist and make more than a living. No other employers in the country could live and save money on the labor of a few men except in merchant tailoring, thanks to the piece system and to the men who are willing to work for honor and imaginary independence."

CORRUPT EMPLOYMENT BUREAUS.

Washington, July 7.—The Supreme court has held unconstitutional a law of the state of Washington making it unlawful for private employment agencies to charge fees to workmen. "To grasp the full gravity of this decision," says the New Republic, "the social background of the law must be visualized. It is sketched with detailed thoroughness in Mr. Justice Brandeis' dissenting opinion. The private employment agency has for years been recognized as one of the sore points of irritation in the industrial machine. It preys on the ignorant and the unskilled, exacting its tribute when the stress of unemployment renders them defenseless. It charges extortionate fees and performs services which are often illusory. The evidence produced by Mr. Justice Brandeis' opinion is overwhelmingly that they are subject to the grossest frauds and dishonesties. Workmen are sent on long trips to jobs which prove to be nonexistent. Collusive arrangements with employers are frequent by which workmen are employed for a few days and then discharged, so that the agency can find them new jobs and exact new tributes. The employment agency thrives on the dislocation of labor and on casual employment, and is as much interested in creating unemployment as in alleviating it. For all this there was the most ample evidence.

VOTE INCREASE.

Denver, July 7.—At the municipal election held in May, charter amendments were adopted by a vote of the people raising the pay of city firemen, policemen, laborers and teamsters employed in the park and street departments. At a regular meeting of the city council, an ordinance was passed giving an increase of 15 per cent to all other city employes receiving less than $1,800 per annum, effective July 1.

By a unanimous vote the council passed on first reading a bill authorizing the department heads to grant the increases.

The reason assigned by Councilman Burnett in introducing the bill was the increasing cost of living. The report of the committee on finance was unanimous in favor of the passage of the ordinance.

CARPENTERS UNITING.

Los Angeles, Cal., July 7.—Deplorable conditions in the wood working industry has awakened union carpenters and millmen to the need for greater organization. This city of boasted "industrial freedom" pays a lower rate and works longer hours in this industry than any city in the state. Cut-throat competition between contractors has intensified the situation. The unionists have adopted a novel system in their campaign. They are making a job-to-job canvas for signatures of non-unionists who agree to pay a small initiation fee "with the understanding that 2,000 others will sign one of these applications and pledge themselves to do the same."

The system is proving successful as the non-unionists are impressed with the mass movement feature of this venture.

LABOR BILLS SIGNED.

Springfield, Ill., July 7.—The amended workmen's compensation law, making it compulsory for all employers to operate under the present compensation act, has been signed by Gov. Lowden, who urged this measure in a special message to the legislature.

Gov. Lowden also signed the child labor bill. This is an amendment to the present law and prohibits the employment of any minor under 14 years old before 7 o'clock in the morning or after 6 o'clock in the afternoon, for more than eight hours in one day nor more than six days a week.

LIVING WAGE CAUSES PANIC.

Greenville, S. C., July 7.—Employers who have been paying 13 and 15 cents an hour for a 10-hour day are panicky because the government is paying living wages in the construction of army camps throughout the South. The Daily News of this city voices employers' sentiments when it whimpers:

"While it is only reasonable to concentrate all labor on the hurried completion of these camps, it is not justifiable to disregard wages nor to destroy the cities of their available labor."

CO-OPS. PAY DIVIDENDS.

Breese, Ill., July 7.—The Co-operative society, in its sixth quarterly report, just issued, announces a dividend of 10 per cent amount to $745.61; paid interest on share and loan capital, $42.15; addition to reserve fund, $[illegible]; quarterly sales to members, $7,494.90; sales to non-members, $2,489.13; total resources, $[illegible].

HATTERS HOMES WILL BE SOLD

Danbury, Conn., July 7.—At the foreclosure by sale, which was entered into by the United States district court of Connecticut by Judge Thomas in the Hatters' case on June 7, 1917, Sidney T. Hawley, former sheriff of Fairfield county, was appointed to sell the homes. The number of homes to be sold is 141. A number of appraisers were appointed by the court to appraise the property with a final limit for their report to be made July 2. The sale will begin on July 16, 1917, at 10 a. m., in Danbury, and will continue at the rate of six or seven homes per day until August 9, when, in accordance with the schedule, all the property will have been disposed of. The successful bidder for each piece of property must pay 25 per cent of the purchase price at the time of the sale and the remaining 75 per cent 15 days after the order of the court approving the sale has been entered. The amount of the judgment was $252,000, but this sum has been drawing interest at the rate of six per cent since October, 1912, and now amounts to over $300,000. Loewe, to whom the court awarded damages, has already taken $60,000 of the Hatters' money, which was deposited in the banks of Danbury and South Norwalk.

GOING SOME.

Washington, July 7.—In a letter dated June 30 from President Mahon of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Men he states that he has been successful in securing a favorable award in a wage arbitration in Detroit. The wages were increased from 27 1-2c to 30c per hour for the first three months service for next twelve-month period from 32 1-2c to 35c for next nine-month period, and from 35c to 40c thereafter. The aggregate increase for the next year for the 3,000 members approximates $500,000. The same increase went also to all the other departments, which are unorganized.

In Chicago President Mahon assisted in negotiating an increase of 3 cents per hour for every man in the service of the Chicago Railways company, the surface roads, and the same to all of the men on the elevated roads. The increase in Chicago to the surface men amounts to $1,454,000 per year. On the elevated roads it amounts to $425,000 per year. This makes a total increase in wages of $2,379,000 a year to about 18,000 men.

UTILIZATION OF PRISONERS.

Washington, July 7.—Ways and means of rendering assistance to the government by caring for interned prisoners and prisoners of war, and of increasing production of foodstuffs through the labor of the more than 100,000 prisoners now in penal and reform institutions, were discussed at an executive conference of the American Prison Association at the Raleigh hotel. The questions of manufacture within the institutions and of former prisoners entering the army also were discussed.

The conference was called as a war emergency movement. In handling interned prisoners and prisoners of war, it is proposed to have members of the various States, and include war-agement of these entirely separate from the inmates of their respective institutions.

Twenty-two States were represented at the conference, the delegates having been appointed by the governors of the various States, and includ wardens, superintendents of prisons and reformatories and members of the boards of trustees.

"We want to make the 100,000 prisoners of the United States concretely available for government service," said Maj. David Coombe Peyton, general superintendent of the Indiana reformatory, who is president of the association.

BOILERMAKERS SCORE.

Duluth, Minn., July 7.—The strike committee of the Boilermakers' union have issued the following statement with respect to the recent settlement of their difficulties with their employers:

"After being out on strike for the past eleven weeks the boilermakers, handy men and helpers in the contract shops at the Head of the Lakes have settled matters satisfactorily to all concerned and will return to work in their respective shops on Monday morning, July 2."

It is understood that certain concessions were made on both sides, but it was agreed that nothing further than the statement quoted above should be made public at this time.

The boilermakers have put up a splendid fight against odds. Their members have stood valiantly by the organization in spite of numerous attempts on the part of paid representatives of detective agencies to break their ranks.

"JOIN YOUR CENTRAL BODY."

Chicago, July 7—"We receive numerous complaints," says the Tailor, "about our locals not being represented in central labor unions; and we also receive some apologies from the unions complained about. There is no apology good enough to excuse a journeyman tailor not being a member of the union. The apology some tailors offer is that the union is not run right. The local unions that are not affiliated with the central labor unions and state federation make the same excuse.

"If the tailor who refuses to join the union because the union is not run as he thinks it should be is right, so is the local union that refuses to join the central labor union. In our humble judgment, they are both wrong. The labor movement consists of local unions, central bodies, state federations and the American Federation of Labor. If we believe in the labor movement, we should be a part of it."

STREET CAR MEN WIN.

Dayton, Ohio, July 7.—The Dayton Street Railway has concluded that the business of smashing trade unions is not a paying one and will hereafter recognize the new union of Street Car men, through its executive committee. It took a two-weeks' strike before the company accepted this viewpoint.

REDUCE WORK DAY.

Albany, N. Y., July 7.—The newly-organised union of chemical workers has reduced their 10 and 11-hour work day to nine hours and increased wages, with time and one-half for overtime. The union's committee will be recognized.

GAINS BY PRESSMEN.

Uniontown, Pa., July 7.—The Pressmen's union has signed a union shop agreement with a morning and afternoon paper in this city.

SHIP OWNERS' GREED NOT CHECKED BY WAR

Washington, July 7.—Under the caption, "Shipping Should Be Controlled," the Washington Post illuminates the greed of ship owners as follows:

"Odd as it may seem, the United States government has not yet assumed any control whatever over the protection of merchant ships against submarines. The shipowners arm their ships or not, as they please; some of them use antisubmarine devices and some do not; and all of them send their ships out from such ports and at such times, as may be convenient to them, without regard to the interests of the government. As ships and cargoes are heavily insured, some shipowners do not deem it necessary to protect their vessels. They take their chances. If the vessel is lost, they collect the insurance. If it gets through, they collect huge profits.

"This lack of system is working to the disadvantage of the government. The nation cannot afford to lose merchant shipping through the carelessness or cupidity of owners. These ships are an asset of the nation. If the government does not deem it wise to commandeer them, it should at least take steps to force owners to protect them as much as possible.

"Private owners ought to be compelled to equip and operate their vessels with some regard for national needs now and hereafter. The fact that the government provides extra war risk insurance seems to act as an agent of destruction, instead of promoting the growth of the merchant marine. If owners could not get insurance they would quickly fit their vessels with antisubmarine devices.

"Every shipowner is morally bound to prevent the loss of his ships if possible. The rights of the nation are paramount to his private rights. No shipowner has a right to charge excessive rates when manufacturers and others are held down to reasonable profits. The ocean freight rates now prevailing are scandalously high—so high as to become a ruinous tax upon the United States and its allies. Too much of the money loaned by the United States to Italy and other nations is finding its way into the pockets of private shipowners."

BOILERMAKERS ACTIVE INCREASES RECORDED

Kansas City, Kans., July 7.—In the regular Weekly Bulletin issued by the Brotherhood of Boilermakers and Iron Ship Builders, the following information is given:

Rochester local, No. 229 has secured agreements with the contract shops and transient firms in that city and surrounding country. These agreements provide for an eight-hour day with the scale of 65 cents per hour for boilermakers, 37 1-2 cents for laborers. The outside work scale calls for eight hours, double time for all overtime work with wage scale of 80 cents per hour or $6 per day, with helpers 62 1-2 cents per hour or $5 per day.

An agreement has been secured with the Todd Shipbuilding Company, of Tacoma, Washington, similar to the one in effect at the Seattle Construction and Dry Dock company's plant.

An agreement has been secured on the Wabash for an increase of 5 cents an hour for mechanics and helpers and 2 1-2 cents an hour for apprentices. This makes a flat rate of 47 cents for all mechanics of all crafts on the system and a flat rate of 30 cents for all laborers of all crafts on the system.

On the Missouri Pacific an agreement has been reached through the Advisory Board of the System Federation, including the following changes: Boilermakers now receiving 44c and 45 cents to receive 50 cents per hour; layer-outs, flangers, boiler inspectors and fitter-ups receive 52 1-2 cents per hour. Flue welders receiving 36 and 37 1-2 cents, to receive 43 cents an hour, making a flat rate on the entire system for flue welders. All boilermakers' helpers now receiving 25c, 26c, 27c and 28c, to receive an advance from a minimum of 32c to 33 1-2c per hour, while the helpers employed at Pueblo, Colorado, now receiving 28 1-2c are to receive 34c per hour. Regular apprentices get an increase of 2 1-2 cents an hour, while their helpers' apprentices are to receive a minimum rate paid helpers at points employed where they commenced their apprenticeship. In conjunction with this settlement the sheet metal workers receive an advance of 50 cents per hour over the entire system.

A settlement of the strike of the contract shops in Omaha, Nebraska, has been secured establishing 55 cents per hour for boilermakers and 32 1-2 cents an hour minimum for laborers.

CONSCRIPT EXEMPTIONS.

Washington, July 7.—President Wilson has announced the regulations to govern the selection of the conscript army. The following classes of persons will be exempted from the draft by local exemption boards:

Officers of the United States and of the several States and Territories and the District of Columbia.

Regularly ordained ministers of religion.

All students of divinity preparing for the ministry on May 18, 1917.

Persons in the military or naval service of the United States.

Subjects of Germany residing in this country.

All other resident aliens who have not taken out their first papers.

The following persons will be discharged by local exemption boards upon investigation:

County and municipal officers.

Custom house clerks.

Persons employed in the transmission of the mails.

Workmen employed in the arsenals, navy yards, and armories of the United States.

Persons employed by the United States designated as exempts by the President.

Steamship pilots.

Mariners actually employed in sea service of any citizen or merchant within the United States.

Any married man whose wife or child is solely dependent upon his labor for support.

Any son of a widow solely dependent upon his labor for support.

Father of a motherless child or children under sixteen years of age solely dependent upon his labor for support.

Brother of a child or children under sixteen years of age who has or have neither father nor mother and is or are solely dependent upon his labor for support.

Any person who is a member of a well-recognized religious sect organized or existing May 18, 1917, whose creed forbids its members to participate in war.

All persons morally deficient, such as criminals.

All claims for exemption must be supported by affidavits.